VII.—GOVERNMENT MOTION:

MOTION UNDER RULE 21 (3) OF THE ASSEMBLY RULES *re* CHANGE IN THE ORDER OF BUSINESS.

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Sir, I move—

" That item 5, the Madras Village Panchayats (Amendment) Bill, 1957, be taken up before item 3, the Madras Registration of Veterinary Practitioners Bill, 1957."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is—

" That item 5, the Madras Village Panchayats (Amendment) Bill, 1957, be taken up before item 3, the Madras Registration of Veterinary Practitioners Bill, 1957."

The motion was put and carried.

VI.—GOVERNMENT BILLS—*cont.*

* (3) THE MADRAS VILLAGE PANCHAYATS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1957.

THE HON. SRIMATHI LOURDHAMMAL SIMON : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg leave to introduce the Madras Village Panchayats (Amendment) Bill, 1957, and move—

" That the Bill be taken into consideration at once."

The question of Reform and Development of Panchayat Organization has been engaging the attention of this Government for some time past and proposals in that regard have been included in the White Paper on the Reform of Local Administration in Madras State including the Madras City Corporation, which is already before the House. This Bill deals with five specific matters about which Government find it necessary to make statutory changes in advance of the general reform of Panchayat Administration.

The first of these five matters relates to the delimitation of areas for which Panchayats are to be constituted. Prior tc the passing of the Madras Village Panchayats Act, 1950, which came into force on 1st April 1951, Panchayats could be constituted for any local area—whether it is a revenue village or part of a revenue village or more than one revenue village. In 1950, an element of rigidity was introduced into this provision. Section 3 read with section 2 (22) of the 1950 Act makes it obligatory to constitute a Panchayat for every revenue village or a hamlet thereof, which was in existence on 1st April 1951 and which is declared by the Inspector of Municipal Councils and Local Boards as a revenue village. As a result, it is obligatory to constitute a Panchayat for a small revenue village with population just exceeding 500, even though it may be administratively convenient and free from local objection to group together two such villages to form a Panchayat village with a population exceeding one thousand. Another difficulty has also been experienced. The law permits the constitution of a panchayat for a hamlet; but there is no express sanction for the separation of a hamlet of a revenue village foi

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